

ISSN - 2141 - 5277

**Journal of  
COMMUNICATION  
and  
MEDIA RESEARCH**

**Vol. 3 No. 1  
April 2011**

**REPORTING, PR  
AND  
CORPORATE IMAGE**

# JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA RESEARCH

ISSN 2141 - 5277

---

Volume 3 No. 1

April 2011

---

## *Contents*

Srinivas R. Melkote	Perceptions of news media performance with alienation from government and business corporations: An Ohio case study	1
Gilbert Motsaathebe	The use of females as sources of information in SABC newscasts	13
Alex Eloho Umuerrri & Godwin O. Shoki	Trends in research methods on press and government relations	25
Aniefiok Udoudo & Bassey, Esuk Bassey	Reporting Political Campaigns in Nigeria: A Study of News Coverage of ACN Rally in Uyo by <i>The Pioneer</i> and <i>The Sensor</i> Newspapers	41
Edith Ugochi Ohaja	Training requirements for the next generation of PR practitioners: An analytical discourse	55
Emmanuel O. Akarah	Public relations as a determinant of effective sports marketing in Nigeria	67
Jenevieve C. Ezeocha & Eserinune M. Mojaye	Mass media influence on discrimination and violence against women in Delta State, Nigeria	75
Lanre O. Amodu & Idowu Sobowale	Intervening factors in conflicts between oil companies and host communities in Nigeria's Niger Delta Region	93
Angela N. Nwammuo	Webcasting in the era of globalization: Implications for Nigeria	105
James A. Ashiekpe & Juliet Ese Ella	Content and patterns of usage of websites of corporate organizations in Nigeria	113

<b>Mudathir Ganiyu</b>	<b>The Internet, new media and approaches to media business in Nigeria: An analysis</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>Stella A. Aririguzoh</b>	<b>Television influence on political knowledge of the 2007 Nigerian presidential elections among residents of Ado-Odo/Ota, Ogun State.</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>Olujimi O. Kayode, Noem T. Thanny &amp; Aishat O. Abisiga</b>	<b>Promotion of health Millennium Development Goals by selected newspapers in Nigeria</b>	<b>151</b>

# Television Influence on Political Knowledge of the 2007 Nigerian Presidential Elections among Residents of Ado-Odo/Ota, Ogun State.

STELLA AMARA ARIRIGUZH\*

## Abstract

This study sought to find out if television broadcasts increased the political knowledge of residents in Ado-Odo/Ota areas of Ogun State, Nigeria during the 2007 Nigerian presidential election. Questionnaires were administered on a sample of 3635 respondents. The Pearson Moment Bivariate Two-Tailed Correlation tests were used to measure the linear associations between respondents' exposure to television broadcasts and their increases in political knowledge. Positive and statistically relevant correlations were found between respondents' exposure to television broadcasts and their increases in the knowledge of the last Nigerian presidential election. The information television gave out made the voters in Ado Odo/Ota to know more about the last presidential election, of the presidential candidates and their political parties. Television broadcasts also made them to be familiar with the identifying logos/marks of the political parties. In addition, voters' exposure to television broadcasts made them to know where to place their thumbprints when voting. Because of the deluge of information provided by television, the voters were further stimulated to find out more about the political parties and about the presidential election contestants. This means that television was influential in educating voters.

**Key Words:** Television, Elections, Voters Knowledge, Politics.

## Introduction

Television is one of the mass media channels that can be used to reach the voting public because of its capacity to inform, educate and entertain its audiences. Television informs through its broadcast of news and commentaries. It is, therefore, used accordingly to stimulate the political interests of the electorate by the information it gives. Bittner (1989, p. 258) writes that television's overwhelming popularity can be attributed to its two dimensions of sight and sound. He adds that many people spend more time watching television than they spend on other media channels. Ross and Nightingale (2003, p. 104) also observe that television can attract and even hold public attention by what it chooses to or not to present to viewers. This means that television can be employed to influence the decisions of those that vote: either to vote for or against an individual and his political party.

Compared to other forms of mass media, television is relatively more important. Antonoff (2007, para 1)) remarks that:

---

\*Stella Amara Aririguzoh is a Lecturer in the Department of Mass Communication, Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria



Television is the most widespread form of communication in the world. Though most people will never meet the leader of a country, travel to the moon, or participate in a war, they can observe these experiences through the images on their television. Television has a variety of applications in society, business, and science. The most common use of television is as a source of information and entertainment for viewers in their homes.

Elections are an important feature of democratic systems and the avenues through which those seeking public offices can be voted in. Candidates with the ambition of occupying such offices generally attempt to use the mass media to maximize their chances of winning at the polls. Nigerian politicians have attempted to make political communication more effective by using television in the hope of influencing electoral outcomes. Television has covered different political processes including major political events and institutions, campaigns and elections. It has consistently provided a direct and sensitive link between the politicians and the electorate. The effective use of television may affect poll results.

The most commonly accepted impact of television is its ability to give information. Baran (2004, p. 450) writes that television is the primary source of public affairs information. Such information may attract voters or discourage them from the polls. In a democratic nation, voters watch television to source for news and information on the government and elections.

It is presumed that the greater the number of voters who go to the polls, the more certain it is that these voters have decided who occupy the public offices. Therefore, the essential demand placed on television during election time is that it provides the public with information. Television is essential for enhanced voting behaviour in advanced democracies where television sets are basic household items. In Nigeria where poverty reigns, the income per capita is extremely low and citizens experience incessant power failures, that at times run into days, has the watching of television programmes affected electoral results.

Television came to Nigeria on October 1, 1959, some twenty years after its appearance in Europe. Since then Nigeria has held six presidential elections. The last of these elections was held in April 2007. Television has been vigorously employed in electioneering campaigns to stir up the electorate or to influence public opinion positively or negatively. Television has brought into millions of homes presidential aspirants' debates. In the 1993 presidential election, the two aspirants held a televised debate. The debate was between M.K.O. Abiola, the flag bearer of the Social Democratic Party (S.D.P) and his National Republican Convention (N.R.C.) opponent, Alhaji Bashir Tofa. During the 1999 elections, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) approved thirty political parties to contest the elections. Most of the parties fielded presidential candidates. The major television stations arranged debate schedules for the contestants. The candidates discussed national issues and the solutions they would offer.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Television is a channel for providing the electorate with information on the parties, their candidates and any other matter that will encourage voters' participation in the electoral process. Minow and Mitchell (1986, pp. 146-157) point out that presidential elections cannot be predicted. However, they share the view that candidates can be put on television to advertise themselves through slickly produced spots and programme length presentations. According to them, presidential electioneering on television informs the electorate through "candidates' commercials, candidates-engineered news clips, special interest broadcasts and quibbling over televised debates conditions". These commercials

may be likened to mini-movies where great care is taken to make each detail of production - like lighting, editing, music, camera angle - pass across a specific message or convey specific mood. According to O'Cass (2001, pp. 136-152), Hayes and McAllister (1996, pp. 135-146), most political parties and their candidates have grown to increasingly rely on television advertising to inform and influence voters during elections.

The works of Faber, Tims and Schmitt (1993, p. 67-76), Hill (1989, p. 14-22), Weaver, Tinkham and Tinkham (1999, pp. 13-30) have led to a better understanding of the role of communication by political parties and the behaviour of voters in response to these pieces of political communication. Understanding voter decision making and the factors that influence their decisions, including what is broadcast on television, are important for practical and theoretical reasons. There are two reasons. Hayes and McAllister (1996, pp. 135-146) identify the first as the considerable economic and social costs associated with electoral choice. Millions of naira are budgeted for television. O'Cass (2001, pp. 136-152) sees the second reason as that of economic and social functioning of a nation being dependent on the policies that the elected politicians implement.

However, the role of television in the electioneering processes in emergent democracies like Nigeria is still under investigation. Against the background of audience low level of media literacy, are voters able to make meanings out of television broadcast contents on election as to increase their political knowledge? Therefore, the problem for investigation was to find out if television broadcasts led to increases in their knowledge of the voters in Ado Odo/Ota in the last Nigerian presidential election.

### **Objective of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to find out if voters in Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area in Ogun State increased their political knowledge about the presidential election because of their watching television broadcasts. This involves:

- (i) Determining whether the information television gave to the voters about the presidential election was clear and adequate;
- (ii) Finding out the specific types of information the television gave out to the voters;
- (iii) Finding out if the information given by television broadened the knowledge base of the voters on the presidential election;
- (iv) Seeking to know if television provided the voters with sufficient information of the presidential candidates and their political parties.

### **Research Question**

Based on the research problem, this study will attempt to answer the Research Question:

- Did the information offered by television result in an improved voters' knowledge of the presidential election?

### **Statement of Hypothesis**

Drawing from the objective of the study, the following hypotheses formulated are tested in this study. The alternative hypotheses are stated first.

H<sub>1</sub>: Exposure to television broadcasts increased the voters' knowledge of the presidential election, of the candidates and the political parties.

H<sub>0</sub>: Exposure to television broadcasts did not increase the voters' knowledge of the residential election, of the candidates and the political parties.



### Literature Review

Television is a mass media channel with the potential for affecting the behaviour of those exposed to its messages. Adanri (2005, p. 142) expounds that television plays important, often taken for granted, roles in the daily lives of the viewers because "it is a story teller; it tells stories to most people most of the time. It is the wholesale distributor of images and forms the mainstream of our popular culture. Television is the nation's most common and constant learning environment. It both selectively mirrors and leads society, and some believe that television can affect behavioural patterns in the different social strata of the society...."

By nature, television is basically a source of entertainment and information. Burton (2000, p. 58) explains that these two functions are intertwined since television entertainment is also informational and informational programmes are packaged to be entertaining. The nature of television explains those features of television that bear on the study of television as a mass communication channel; as an industry and as a cultural agent. Television may also be seen in terms of what is packaged in a particular manner for it to air, for example television drama or the contents that it airs, for example, sports.

Skormand and Schroder (1992, p. 62) see television as the most powerful form of public communication that occupies a principal position in the social negotiation of ideas, values and lifestyles. Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorielli (1989, pp. 17-40) remark that television mostly shares images and messages. They add that television is also the most common source of everyday information in a heterogeneous population. As Woll and Binstock (1991, p. 475) remark, "the pervasiveness of television including the fact that a vast majority of people gain most of their news and views of political candidates from it, makes it the most significant medium in shaping political views." Morgan and Signorielli (1990, pp. 13-34) explain that television has become the world's most common and constant learning environment that mirrors and leads the society. This confirms the assertion of Gerbner and Gross (1976, pp. 172-194) that today's television set is a key member of the household with implicit access to every person in the house! It is not a surprise when they remark that "most people watch television more religiously than they attend church services.

In the present day of television saturation, Van den Bar (1971, pp. 193-205) remarks that television itself has changed many things. He explains that television now transmits information directly to a mass audience. These messages are validated by people that are significant in the lives of the viewers or by the people that they respect. Prior to this, Lazasfeld and his team (1944) found the opposite situation where information was transmitted to a small group of well-informed persons who then interpreted and passed on the messages to other people in a face-to-face discussion!

Public access broadcasting fulfils an important function in democracy. Moyser and Wagstaffe (1987) and Puwar (1997) say that it provides the public a platform for the sharing of views and opinions. This platform can potentially influence the decisions of the listening audience. Hellar (1978) stresses that such a forum constitutes an extra political power base where the broadcasters assist the politicians to check the pulse of the nation. Democracy is served by the range and diversity of television programmes, which allow the voters to share their views and to hold the politicians to account. Television programmes provide the platform for the exchange and consideration of views without the explicit intention to achieve consensus but with the implicit intention of encouraging dialogue between the public and the politicians, whereby the latter at least listens to the former.

However, Minow and Mitchell (1976, pp. 74-87) feel that television can best fulfil this role by televised National Debates, offering limited right of reply for the opposition party, having the government sponsor broadcast time for presidential candidates, and

television covering congressional proceedings to counter what they describe as *incumbent television* that gives the incumbent president ready access to television time to reach millions of potential voters regularly at little or no cost to himself or his political supporters. In contrast, the opposition party and those potential candidates who would challenge the incumbent's re-election have little similar access. Minow and Mitchell (1986, p. 146) were later to advise that the public is better served by the broadcasters presenting only the two leading candidates and ignoring every other candidate and not even providing them with the required equal time to have their say!

The mass media act primarily as the conveyor of information from the candidates, their parties and the voting public. Communication facilitates the operation and maintenance of political systems. Tichenor, Donohue and Olien (1990) call attention to the press functioning as an instrument of significance because it is an essential part of the society and of the political structure. The three main actors clamouring for space on the public stage are the government, citizens and the media. Light (1991), cited in Edwards and Wood (1999, pp. 327-344) writes that the media are "... a bridge to the political environment". Lippmann (1922, p. 3) adds that the media is the mediator between "the world outside and the pictures in our heads" because they are the primary sources of those pictures in our heads about the larger world of public affairs, a world that for most citizens is "out of reach, out of sight, out of mind." He argues (1922, p. 16) that this is so because "the real environment is altogether too big, too complex and too fleeting for direct acquaintance" which people are not equipped to deal with! However, Behr and Iyengar (1985, p. 40) argue that not all the world is out of reach! What people know about the world depends largely on what the media decides to tell them. Explicitly, this mediated observation of the world translates to the main concerns of the media strongly becoming the priorities of the public. Whatever is prominent on the media agenda becomes prominent in the public mind.

Roskin, Cord, Medeiros and Jones (2003, p. 154) pertinently observe that every political action is a reaction to a form of communication. The role of the mass media in the political process is dependent on how it affects the different groups in the society as the media offers contrasting viewpoints on the same issue.

Lippmann (1922) on the other hand writes that the media informs by defining

Our world, not just the world of politics during and between elections, but almost all our world beyond our immediate personal and family matters. The issues, personalities and situations towards which we hold feelings of endorsement or rejection, those points of attention about which pollsters seek the public sphere pulse are things about which we depend on the media to inform us.

Lippmann believes that the media have the power to persuade and change the voter's attitude. Media persuasion is not the mere putting of ideas into media consumers heads, but the search to draw out emotional responses from them.

The media are present in the society to act as the mirrors that reflect the happenings in the society. According to Huggins and Turner (1997, p. 392) our modern day society is pre-eminently media based with an increasing growing use of personal computers and telemedia, thus signalling a new era of media pervasiveness. West and Turner (2004, p. 375) point out that very few institutions affect our lives more than the media. They observe that media presences not only invade our lives, but that they follow us everywhere. In democratic societies, the media are more popular channels of communication between the office holders and the citizens. Adeseye and Ibagere (1999, p. 101) say that the essence of communication in politics is for those who are vested with the opportunity of exercising political power to get information about those over which



such power will be exercised. At the same time, the governed receive information about how political power is exercised over them. The two writers explain that this two-way flow of information is necessary for the formulation of policies by the governors and for the governed to understand those policies and consequently decide whether to accept or reject them. However, the relationship between the governors and the media are at times adversarial. Indeed, an ex-American President, George Washington, burst out in 1792 over this role in the following manner:

if the government and the officers of it are to be the constant theme for newspaper abuse, and this too without condescending to investigate the motives or the facts, it will be impossible, I conceive, for any man living to manage the helm or to keep the machine together.

Interestingly, another former American President, Thomas Jefferson, in his 1787 letter to Edward Carrington had expressed a contrary view:

I am persuaded myself that the good sense of the people will always be found to be the best army. They may be led astray for a moment, but will soon correct themselves... (if given) full information of their affairs through the channel of the public papers, and ... these papers should penetrate the whole mass of the people. The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and where it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.

In 1820, Jefferson (as cited in Buchanan 1991, p. 19) further emphasize that even if the members of the public are not enlightened enough to exercise control in the society with good discretion, the answer does not lie in taking away information from them, but in giving them more to inform their discretion. Without the requisite information, the voters face what Lupia and McCubbins (1998) call the *democratic dilemma* because they may not be able to make reasoned choices. Without knowledge, Madison writes that:

Men of factious tempers, of local prejudices, or of sinister designs, may, by intrigue, by corruption, or by any other means, first obtain the suffrages, and then betray the interests of the people.

(Madison, *Federalist* 10).

Thus he advises that:

Knowledge will forever govern ignorance, and a people who mean to be their own governors, must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives. A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy or perhaps both.

It is the work of the mass media to give the public these pieces of information. Miller (1994, p. 97) says that political knowledge is through such mass media such as television, radio, the press and on line services.

Ladd (1989, p. 522) writes that the press involvement in the political process applies specially to party political and electoral campaigns. Electoral campaigns are crusades aimed at getting the contestants elected into the offices they are contesting for. For example, Temin and Smith (2002, p. 587) point out that Ghana's December 2000

presidential and parliamentary elections were successful because of the lively contributions of the media. The opposition led by John Kufour's New Patriotic Party won, defeating Jerry Rawling's incumbent National Democratic Congress.

Roskin, Cord, Medeiros and Jones (2003, p. 153) also point out that the media are recognized components of politics all over the world and have been used to reach millions of voters simultaneously. They emphasize that the mass media yield greater voter or public opinion returns. Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee (1954, p. 234) underline the importance of the mass media in political communication. They observe that the political candidates do not go in person to the people, but rather through the mass media. Lang and Lang (1966, p. 466) assert that the information the mass media provide may be the only contact some of the people will have with politics. They explain that all the promises and pledges of the candidates, reported as stories, in the newspaper columns or presented as editorials constitute the information base from which individual voters make their decisions.

Patterson (2004, p. 220) remarks that no other act of political participation takes more of the peoples' time than does news consumption. According to him, news is important for citizens' participation, and that for such participation to be effective and intelligent, it must be based on their awareness of what is happening in their communities, nations and the world.

Why are there increases in using the mass media in political communication? The mass media disseminate political knowledge. Democracy depends on informed citizens and most of these citizens look to the mass media for information. Miller (1994, p. 133) emphasizes that the mass media "facilitate the public discourse necessary to make the system work". The mass media provide information through news reports, programmes, editorials and commentaries. Allan (2004, p.77) writes that what the mass media offer as news go beyond the reporting and presentation of the political processes to include the interpretation or breaking up of stories and events into digestible bites that viewers can swallow. The media create plausible backgrounds against which the information they provide are interpreted to the people.

Roskin, Cord, Medeiros and Jones (2003, p. 154) offer another reason why the mass media are getting more involved in politics. They write that the mass media reach an infinitely larger audience than face-to-face communication. This means that they reach large numbers of voters than the politician would have reached with a one-to-one communication. They explain that a speech that is carried on television can reach millions of people at the same time than a speech given at the largest rally that may only be heard by a few thousand people. Roskin, Cord, Medeiros and Jones further say that even if a small percentage of the television viewers positively respond to what the speaker says, this response can become thousands of voters, and that is enough to win an election!

Allan (2004, p. 77) calls journalists the pre-eminent storytellers of modern society. According to him, their news accounts of happenings outside our immediate horizons shape our perceptions of the outside world. He claims that many people get to know what is happening around them and in the society through journalists' reports. They also get to know what they should care about from the news stories the journalists tell.

Olukotun (2002, p. 32) highlights another role the mass media plays in political communication in the following observation:

the current wave of democratization has re-affirmed the importance of the media as a vital artery of civil society in delegitimizing autocracies, in fostering transition projects as well as in consolidating and sustaining democracies.



This confirms Aiyar's (1979, p. 4) assertion that in a democracy the media should function as the voice of the masses and as a force to remind the powers-that-be of their duties to the society.

Cook (1998) writes that politics and the media feed off each other. He illustrates that the mass media operate as institutions in the political industry as well as act as sources of influence on the electorate that decide what happens in the political sphere. The political arena is a public sphere. It is doubtful whether either can exist without the other. The media and the politicians operate in the public sphere. What is a public sphere? Habermas (1974, pp. 49-55) responds that it is what results when "private individuals assembly to form a public body" in which that may "confer in unrestrained fashion." The public sphere is the place where communicative actions are taken to determine what happens in the society. Example: good governance. Individuals and groups come together to discuss matters of mutual interest and where possible, reach a common judgment. The public sphere hinges on participatory democracy: turning public opinion into political action. Pradip and Zaharom (2005, p. 106) explain that the public sphere is characterized by a broad communication that gives everybody the opportunity to participate irrespective of ethnicity, religion, gender, economic status and power status. The participants can place their concerns on the public agenda for transparent public deliberation. Oyero (2008, p. 35) adds that communication is the instrument that guarantees effective participation.

The role of the media in a democracy may be found in the famous statement of Kofi Annan - the Secretary General of the United Nations:

For an election to be truly fair, different parties and candidates should have equal access to the media. Neither state power nor the power of money should determine that one party gets a hearing while another is denied it. The media must actively seek out the truth on the public's behalf, and be free to tell it as they see it.

(Africa's Thirst for Democracy. *Evening News*. 6 December 2000, p. 7)

### **Methodology**

**The Research Design:** The research design was survey. It specified how data was collected and analyzed. This design conveniently lends itself to uses in studies involving large human samples and the aggregate of their views on an issue or problem. Its aim is to find out why they behave in a particular way and what their behaviour would be under a given condition. A group of people are studied by collecting and analyzing data from a few members of the group considered representative of the entire population. From these, the researcher draws a conclusion concerning the whole population. According to Ojo (2005, p. 52) the survey design makes it possible to study the sample and variables as they are, without the researcher making any attempt to control or manipulate them. This research method proved useful in determining the relationship between the variables in this study

**Study Population:** The population for this study comprised all the registered voters, in the 2007 Nigerian General Elections, residing in Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government. They were the people who voted. They are Nigerians above the age of 18 years at the time of the election. Ado-Odo/Ota is one of the Local Councils in Ogun State. This local council was purposively selected because it is a unique society, exhibiting both the characteristics of the urbanized and rural communities. It is strategically located as the next door neighbour to metropolitan Lagos. Lagos is the nation's economic, commercial and industrial nerve-centre. Indeed, urbanization and city development are rapidly moving from Lagos to Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area. It is ethnically heterogeneous being home to all the major ethnic groups in Nigeria. Yet, the council still



maintains some traditional characteristics peculiar to rural societies. Residents of Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area receive television signals from twelve television stations including Gateway Television, Abeokuta. Others are the Africa Independent Television (AIT), Alagbado; Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), Tejuosho and Victoria Island; Galaxy, Channels, Silverbird, Muri Television (MITV), Degue Broadcasting Network (DBN), Lagos State Television/Lagos Weekend Television all located in Lagos.

This Council houses two constituencies, Constituencies I and II. Constituency I has eight wards. Constituency II also has eight wards or Registration Areas. Attention was focused on both constituencies. Three wards were chosen from each of the constituencies. The population of this study were the 187,391 registered voters in these constituencies. The questionnaire was administered to 3,635 respondents distributed into thirty polling stations. Only 3,064 copies were returned. This is 84.29% return rate.

**Sample Frame:** The sampling frame is a list of all the units in the study population. The sample frame for this study is the compiled list of polling stations from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). Under each Constituency were many listed polling stations. There were 277 polling stations for the two Constituencies.

**Sampling Procedure And Sample Size:** The sampling procedure is the method or procedure used in drawing or selecting the voters from the wards for the study. It is the scheme used to select the respondents. The sampling technique used is the random probability sampling technique to guarantee every element of the population an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample. In other words, there is an excellent chance that the resultant sample is a close representation of the residents of Ado-Odo/Ota. whole population. Voters were picked from Constituencies I and II at random without any element being given any priority.

The sampling procedure used was the multi-stage cluster sampling technique. The voters were already grouped or divided into different clusters or wards based on the geographical location of their wards. Altogether there were 16 such clusters. Six of these wards were picked - three from each constituency - based on the selection process below. The systematic sampling method was used to select the three wards to be sampled.

**STEP 1:**            *Numbering the wards up to 16.*

**STEP 2:**            *Finding the sampling interval*

This is the standard distance between the selected elements.

$$\begin{aligned}
 &= \frac{\text{population size}}{\text{selected number of wards}} \\
 &= \frac{16}{6} \\
 &= 2.66 \\
 &= 3
 \end{aligned}$$

This meant that every 3<sup>rd</sup> ward from the first one was picked until the desired six wards were completed. The wards picked for Constituency I were Ota 1, Sango and Iju. For Constituency II, Ado-Odo II, Ketu/Adie-Owe and Agbara II were chosen. The first ward, Ota 1 was selected as the starting point. Five percent of the registered numbers of voters from these wards were sampled on the assumption that they would provide a large enough sample for meaningful analysis. Thus 3,635 voters were selected for the study. The individual respondents were selected from the households.

**Data Presentation and Analysis**

The following are the percentages of respondents that claimed that television gave them information on different aspects of the presidential election.

VARIABLE	%
Creating Awareness of presidential elections	74.2
Facilitating familiarity with contestants names	76.3
Knowledge of contestants' political party names	74.2
Knowledge of various political parties	71.0
Knowledge of various political parties logo	72.2
Knowing where to thumbprint	57.6
n= 3,064	

From the figures above, it can be seen that television broadcasts actually increased the knowledge base of the voters in Ado Odo/Ota local government area. On the overall, 70.92 % of the respondents believed that television broadcasts gave them information. This means that the majority of the respondents agreed that television provided them with information about the presidential election. These respondents cut across respondents living in the urban, rural, and suburban areas; different age grades; academic qualifications; occupations and even party membership.

This finding is consistent with Trenaman and McQuail's (1961, p. 168) study of the 1959 British General Elections where they discovered that television and other mass media channels merely provided information for the electorate. Thus, we see that television plays the important role of enhancing the knowledge of the electorate about the individuals bidding for their votes. This means that television is effective in informing and educating the electorate. This fact, regardless of what people say about pre-determining their candidates for elective posts, is enough for politicians to invest in television campaigns and advertisements. The functions of television to inform and educate reinforce the need for political communicators and their strategists to use television to reach the electorate with different messages on their candidates. Such knowledge will make the names of their candidates to be better known and recognizable with the electorate. Voters need to know and identify these names on the ballot papers. Thus, political parties should employ more use of television to make themselves more known, especially in Nigeria where there are presently fifty one parties jousting for the voters attention and more may still emerge on the horizon before the next elections.

Thus, it can be concluded that television was a major source for identifying party symbols and other paraphernalia. For instance, majority of the respondents said that they got to know about the logos and other symbols of the various parties through television. It is important to point out that the ability of a voter to identify or differentiate the logos of the different parties' meant that this voter was able to cast his vote for the specific party that he wanted because he cannot mistake its marks or identity for another competing party. This means that television was instrumental in educating voters about the places that they should place their thumbprints on the ballot papers during the voting process. Thus, television continued its education function for the voters. For government bodies like INEC and NGOs interested in building up the active participation of citizens during elections, this means that they can employ television to show the voters what to do at the polling stations.

## Testing of Hypothesis

$$Y_{vk} = f(T_{pe}, T_{cn}, T_{pc}, T_{pp}, T_{pm}, T_{tp}, U) \quad \dots \quad \text{Model 1}$$

Where:

- $Y_{vk}$  = Voters' knowledge
- $T_{pe}$  = Television making voters to know about the last presidential election
- $T_{cn}$  = Television making voters to be familiar with contestants' names
- $T_{pc}$  = Television making voters to be familiar with parties of the contestants
- $T_{pp}$  = Television making voters know about the various political parties
- $T_{pm}$  = Television making voters to know the different party marks/logos
- $T_{tp}$  = Television making voters know where to thumbprint
- $U$  = Error term representing other factors not included in the model

The functional forms of the above equation can be stated explicitly as follows:

$$Y_{vk} = a_0 + a_1T_{pe} + a_2T_{cn} + a_3T_{pc} + a_4T_{pp} + a_5T_{pm} + a_6T_{tp} + U \quad \dots \quad \text{Equation 1}$$

The Pearson Correlation Test reveals a positive and significant correlation of 0.464 {0.01} level of significance between voters knowing about the last presidential election and their familiarity with the names of the contestants. In other words, the information television gave made these voters' knowledge of the names of the contestants in the last presidential election to increase. The names of the candidates became easily recognizable to them. There is also a positive correlation value of 0.476 between the voters knowing about the last presidential election and their familiarity with the names of the political parties of these contestants that nominated them as candidates to contest for the presidency. This means that voters who were exposed to television broadcasts became familiar with the names of the various political parties that contested in the election. In a likewise fashion, a positive relationship of 0.416 is established between voters knowing about the last presidential election and their knowing the various political parties. Thus, voters who were exposed to television broadcasts knew the names of the various political parties that ran for the elections.

In the same fashion, there is a positive relationship between voters' knowledge of the presidential election and their ability to make distinctions among the different marks and logos identifying the different political parties. Each party's mark is different and unique. But the correlation value is 0.329. This indicates a weak relationship. This is not surprising as there were fifty political parties that ran in this same election. Equally, there was a positive, but weak relationship between voters' knowledge of the presidential election and their knowing where to thumbprint on the ballot papers. The correlation value was 0.334 between these voters exposure to television and their knowledge of where to place their thumbprints when they voted.

It can therefore be asserted that all the relationships between voters knowing about the presidential election and their exposure to television were all positive and significant. This means that voters got to know about the presidential through television.

There is a high positive relationship between voters' familiarity with the names of the contestants in the presidential election and the names of the contestants' political parties. This means that the voters' exposure to television broadcasts made them to know the names of the presidential candidates and their political parties. There was also a positive relationship ( $r = .544$ ) between the voters' familiarity with the contestants' names and their awareness of the various political parties.

Although there are positive relationships of 0.396 and 0.297 existing between voters' familiarity with the names of the presidential contestants and their capabilities to clearly distinguish among the different symbols representing the various political parties; and the



voters knowing where to thumbprint during the election, these relationships are not very strong. In other words, the voters' exposure to television made them to recognize the distinguishing marks that differentiate one party from another. Television also made them to know where to place their thumbprints.

Voters who watched television also became more familiar with the labels of the various political parties. We can see a positive correlation value of .588 between familiarity with the names of the political parties and television making them to be on familiar terms with the various political parties. This indicates a strong relationship between voters' exposure to television and their acquaintance with the political parties. Similarly, there is a positive but moderate relationship of 0.425 between voters' familiarity with the names of the political parties and their power to clearly recognize the different marks/logos that identify the various political parties. Another positive relationship of 0.330 is established between voters' familiarity with the names of the political parties and their knowledge of where to place their thumbprints.

There is also a positive and significant correlation of 0.493 and 0.352 between voters knowledge of the various parties and television, clearly showing them the special marks/logos of the various political parties; and their knowing where to place their thumbprints when voting. This means that voters' exposure to television broadcasts also exposed them to the understanding of the different political parties; the signs that make them look dissimilar, and taught these voters where to place their thumbprints when they voted. A positive moderate correlation of 0.467 is identified with voters' ability to identify the different marks/logos of the parties and their knowledge of where to thumbprint during the election.

### **Acceptance of Hypothesis**

It can be seen that there are positive and significant correlations among all the variables that tested voters' exposure to television and their increase in knowledge about the contestants, the political parties and the last presidential election. Of importance are the relatively high correlation figures ranging from 0.416 - 0.629 indicating the various ways television broadcasts enriched the knowledge of the respondents. Particularly, television broadcasts increased voters' knowledge of the names of the political parties and also the names of the contestants that ran for the presidential election on their platforms. In fact, there are relatively high correlations of 0.588 and 0.629 respectively. Similarly, television broadcasts made the respondents to know the names of the other political parties with a correlation value of 0.544. In other words, a firm relationship exists between the amount of coverage that these presidential candidates received on television and the respondents' knowledge of the political parties that sponsored them and also to know the names of the other political parties.

This demands an acceptance of the alternative hypothesis that exposure to television broadcasts increased the voters' knowledge of the presidential election, of the candidates and of the political parties. Consequently, the null hypothesis that states that exposure to television broadcasts did not increase the voters' knowledge of the presidential election, of the candidates and the political parties is rejected.

### **Summary of Findings**

It can be concluded that television made voters in Ado-Odo local Government to know about the last Nigerian presidential election. The information offered through television broadcasts increased the knowledge base of the respondents by making them to know about this particular election, the contesting candidates and the various political parties. Television broadcasts also improved voters' awareness of specific contestants' names,

their political parties, their different party logos or distinguishing marks and where to thumbprint in the election.

However, the more prominent political parties and their candidates had more information about them aired on television. This reinforced respondents' knowledge of them. The presidential contestants who had earlier played on the political fields were easily more recognized by the respondents. Those who were contesting for the first time did not command much television presence and consequent public knowledge.

## Conclusion

Most of the voters accessed television broadcasts and these broadcasts primarily gave out information on and created awareness of the presidential election. The media can indirectly decide electoral outcomes depending on what they choose to cover or not cover. Democracy is all about people making informed decisions on who will exercise rulership over them. For some of the people to make this informed decision, they need what the media have to offer, especially on candidates and parties that they know little or nothing about. Television gave voters information.

## References

- Adanri, B. (2005). *Fundamentals, ethics and effects of television*. Akure: Linda Bee Publishing.
- Adeseye, F. & Ibagere, E. (1999). *Communication and man: A theoretical base for the student*. Akure: Ola-Olu Enterprises.
- Aiyar, R. (1979). *Quest for news*. New Delhi: The Macmillan Company.
- Allan, S. (2004). *News culture* (2nd ed.). Berkshire: Open University Press.
- Antonoff, M. (2007). *Television: Microsoft® student 2008 [DVD]*. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation.
- Baran, S.J. (2004). *Introduction to mass communication: Media literacy and culture*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Behr, R.L. & Iyengar, S. (1985). Television news, real-world cues and changes in the public agenda. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 49, 38-57.
- Berelson, B.R., Lazarsfeld, P.F. & McPhee, W.N. (1954). *Voting: A study of opinion formation in a presidential campaign*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bittner, J.R. (1989). *An introduction to mass communication* (5th ed.). Englewoods, New Jersey: Prentice/Hall.
- Burton, G. (2000). *Talking tv: An introduction to the study of tv*. London/New York: Arnold/Oxford University Press.
- Cook, T.E. (1998). *Governing with the news: The news media as a political institution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Faber, R., Tims A. & Schmitt, K. (1993). Negative political advertising and voting intent: The role of involvement and alternative information sources. *Journal of Advertising* 22(4), 67-76.
- Gerbner, G. & Gross, L. (1976). Living with television: The violence profile. *Journal of Communication*, Vol. 26, No 2, 172-194.
- Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M. & Signorielli N. (1989). Living with television: The dynamics of the cultivation process. In J. Bryant & D. Zilmann (Eds.), *Perspectives on media effects* (pp. 17-40). Nahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Habermas, J. (1974). The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article. *New German Critique* 3, 49-55.
- Hayes, B. & McAllister, I. (1996). Marketing politics to voters: Late deciders in the 1992 British election. *European Journal of Marketing*, 30(10/11), 135-146.

- Hellar, C. (1978). *Broadcasting and accountability. Monograph No 7*. London: British Film Institute.
- Hill, R. (1989). An exploration of voter response to political advertisements. *Journal of Advertising*, 18(4), 14-22.
- Huggins, R. & Turner J. (1997). The politics of influence and control. In B. Axford., G.K. Browning., R. Huggins., B. Rosamond & J. Turner, *Politics: An introduction*. Routledge: London.
- Jefferson, T. (1977) Notes on the state of Virginia. In M.D. Peterson (Ed.), *The portable Thomas Jefferson*. Harmondsworth, Penguin Books.
- Kofi Annan (Africa's Thirst for Democracy. Evening News. 6 December 2000, p. 7)
- Ladd, E.C. (1989). *The American Polity: The People and their government* (3rd ed.). New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Lang, K. & Lang, G.E. (1966). The mass media and voting. In B. Berelson & M. Janowitz (Eds.), *Reader in public opinion and communication* (2nd ed.). (pp. 466-468). New York: Free Press.
- Lazarsfeld, P., Berelson, B. & Gaudet, H. (1944). *The peoples' choice: How the voter makes up his mind in a presidential campaign*. New York & London: Columbia University Press.
- Light, P.C. (1991). Cited in Edwards, G.C. III. & Wood, D. (1999). Who influences whom? The president, congress and the media. *The American Political Science Review*, 93, (20), 327-344.
- Lippman, W. (1922). *Public opinion*. New York: Macmillan.
- Lupia, A. & McCubbins, M.D. (1998). *The democratic dilemma: Can citizens learn what they need to know?* Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1.
- Madison, J. *Federalist 10*.
- Miller, E.D. (1994). *The Charlotte Project: Helping citizens take back democracy*. St. Petersburg: Poynter Institute for Media Studies.
- Minow, N.N. & Mitchell, L.M. (1986). Putting on the candidates: The use of television in presidential elections. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 486, 146-157.
- Minow, N.N. & Mitchell, L.M. (1976). Incumbent television: A case of indecent exposure. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 425, No. 1, 74-87.
- Morgan, M. & Signorielli, N. (1990). Cultivation analyses: Conceptualization and methodology. In N. Signorielli & M. Morgan (Eds.), *Cultivation analyses: New directions in media effects research* (pp. 13-34). Newbury Park, California: Sage.
- Moyser, G. & Wagstaffe, M. (1987). Studying elites: Theoretical and methodological issues. In G. Moyser & M. Wagstaffe (Eds.), *Research methods for elite studies*. London: Allen & Urwin.
- O'Cass, A. (2001). The internal-external marketing orientation of a political party: Social implications of political party marketing orientation. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 1(2), 136-152.
- Ojo, O. (2005). *Fundamentals of research methods*. Lagos: Standard Publications.
- Olukotun, A. (2002). *State repression, crisis of democratization and media resistance in Nigeria (1988-1999)*. Ibadan: College Press Ltd.
- Oyero, S.O. (2008). Expansion of the public sphere in Nigerian democracy: The imperative of media pluralism. In F.I.A. Omu & G.E. Oboh (Eds.), *Mass media in Nigerian democracy* (pp. 33-45). Ibadan: Stirling-Horden Publishers.
- Patterson, T.E. (2004). *We the people: A concise introduction to American politics* (5th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.



- Pradip, N.T & Zaharom, N. (Eds.) (2005). *Who owns the media: Global trends and local resistance*. London: Zed Books.
- Puwar, N. (1997). Reflections on interviewing women MPs. *Sociological research on line* 2(1). <http://www.socreonline.org.uk/socreonline/2/1/4.html>.
- Roskin, M.G., Cord, R.L., Medeiros, J.A. & Jones, W.S. (2003). *Political science: An introduction* (9th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Educational International/ Prentice/ Hall.
- Ross, K. & Nightingale, V. (2003). *Media and audiences: New perspectives*. Berkshire, England: Open University Press.
- Skormand, M. & Schroder, K.C. (1992). (Eds.). *Media cultures: Re-appraising transnational media*. Routledge: London.
- Temin, J. & Smith, D.A. (2002). Media matters: Evaluating the role of the media in Ghana's 2000 election. *African Affairs*, 585-605.
- Tichenor, P.J., Donohue, G.A. & Olien, C.N. (1990). Communication and community conflict. In D.A. Graber (Ed.), *Media power in politics*. New Delhi : S.G Wasani.
- Trenaman, J. & McQuail, D. (1961). *Television and the political image*. London: Methuen & Co.
- Van den Bar, A.W. (1971). A review of the two-step flow of communication hypothesis. In L.L. Barker & R.Kiebler (Eds.), *Speech Communication Behaviour* (pp. 193-205). Englewoods Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice/Hall.
- Weaver, L., Tinkham, R. & Tinkham, S. (1999). The sleeper effect and negative political advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 28(4), 13-30.
- West, R. & Turner, L.H. (2004). *Introducing communication theory: Analysis and application* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.
- Woll, P. & Binstock, R.H. (1991). *America's political system: A text with cases* (5th ed.). McGraw-Hill Inc, New York.

# JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA RESEARCH

ISSN 2141 - 5277

Volume 3 No. 1

April 2011

## Contents

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Srinivas R. Melkote                                   | Perceptions of news media performance with alienation from government and business corporations: An Ohio case study                           |
| Gilbert Motsaathebe                                   | The use of females as sources of information in SABC newscasts  |
| Alex Eloho Umuerrri & Godwin O. Shoki                 | Trends in research methods on press and government relations  |
| Aniefiok Udoudo & Bassey, Esuk Bassey                 | Reporting Political Campaigns in Nigeria: A Study of News Coverage of ACN Rally in Uyo by <i>The Pioneer</i> and <i>The Sensor</i> Newspapers |
| Edith Ugochi Ohaja                                    | Training requirements for the next generation of PR practitioners: An analytical discourse  |
| Emmanuel O. Akarah                                    | Public relations as a determinant of effective sports marketing in Nigeria  |
| Jenevieve C. Ezeocha & Eserinune M. Mojaye            | Mass media influence on discrimination and violence against women in Delta State, Nigeria   |
| Lanre O. Amodu & Idowu Sobowale                       | Intervening factors in conflicts between oil companies and host communities in Nigeria's Niger Delta Region                                   |
| Angela N. Nwammuo                                     | Webcasting in the era of globalization: Implications for Nigeria  |
| James A. Ashiekpe & Juliet Ese Ella                   | Content and patterns of usage of websites of corporate organizations in Nigeria   |
| Mudathir Ganiyu                                       | The Internet, new media and approaches to media business in Nigeria: An analysis  |
| Stella A. Aririguzoh                                  | Television influence on political knowledge of the 2007 Nigerian presidential elections among residents of Ado Odo/Ota, Ogun State.           |
| Olujimi O. Kayode, Noem T, Thanny & Aishat O. Abisiga | Promotion of health Millennium Development Goals by selected newspapers in Nigeria  |